



2018 The Year of F.O.C.U.S

**FOCUS ON OUR FAITH, FOCUS ON OUR FAMILIES, FOCUS ON OUR FITNESS,
FOCUS ON OUR FINANCES, FOCUS ON OUR FUTURE.**

RISE UP!

A Faithful Focus

Nehemiah 1 and 2

Introduction:

Focus:

- 1) *The center of interest, attraction, or activity.*
- 2) *Pay particular attention to.*
- 3) *To concentrate.*
- 4) *To direct one's attention or efforts.*

A new year usually yields a desire to achieve new goals. In order to reach our goals, we must examine our focus and focuses (personal and community, spiritual and secular). The Book of Nehemiah provides principles, precepts, and insights to help us in these areas.

The Importance of Walls and Gates

Temple = Our Building/Sanctuary

Walls = Our community impact, fellowship, and ministry success

Living without walls make us reactive, instead of proactive.

A reactive person is uninformed, they are unaware.

Emotional and Mental Reaction

1. Pain is normal in all of our lives. (v. 4)
2. It can be healthy if we learn how to process it.
3. The results of this processing can lead to our passion.

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- a. Our passion can direct our focus.
- b. Selfless passion vs Selfish passion
- c. Selfish passion leads to a selfish focus.
- d. Selfless passion leads to a selfless focus.
- e. Passion Test: What or Who have shaped/formed your passions?

4. Prayer and fasting can be the panacea for our pain.

Nehemiah Shows Us How To Pray

1. Our prayers should be penitential in nature.
2. He humbled himself by confessing and repenting of his sins and the sins of his community.
3. He looks to God's promises and reminds God of them. He knew the Word of God. We should plead the promises of God.
4. He made a promise to God.
5. God gives Nehemiah a plan.
6. Our focus evolves into our passion. Our passion is supported through prayer. Our prayer reveals God's plan.

Nehemiah prayed patiently and in pain for 4 months!

God's plan unfolds through a rebellious transparency.

Sadness in the presence of the king was forbidden.

Nehemiah's Politics/Polity

Nehemiah understands Godly providence and earthly prudence.

Nehemiah petitions the king. (2:6)

The God-given plan includes a timetable – Our plans should be timed and measurable.

Nehemiah is given a passport and a promotion. (2:7-8)

We have to be willing to do the required physical labor to complete the project. (2:8)

Know that player-haters won't be pleased when you're in the Will of God. (2:9-10)

Operate in patience and privacy, until the appointed time arrives. (2:11-12)

Realize the importance of partnership. (2:12 and 2:16)

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Prospection is a prerequisite in carrying out God's plan. (2:13-16)

Present the plan after thorough assessment and strategic- planning. (2:17)

Nehemiah's plan was for everyone to RISE UP! (2:18, NKJV)

Focus on God's work, not the punks and player-haters. (2:19)

Don't be afraid to proclaim God's Hand on the plan! (2:20)

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